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SUBJECT: PAKISTAN MEDIA REACTION: DECEMBER 12, 2008

Summary: Reports and photographs on the "country-wide crackdown on Jamaatud Daawa" and the arrest of its leader, Hafiz Mohammad Saeed, dominated front pages in all newspapers on Friday. Side by side, reports from the United Nations Security Council declaring three leaders of banned militant outfit, Lashkar-e-Taiba, on a terrorist watch list also garnered front-page coverage. Also front-paged were reports that U.S. Deputy Secretary Negroponte during his meetings with senior Pakistani civilian and military leaders observed that the "U.S. fully supported Pakistan's war on terror policies." The remarks by Indian Prime Minister Singh urging Pakistan "to root out epicenter of terror" were figured prominently. Notwithstanding government's reported ban on "public and private TV channels not to air statements by banned Pakistani outfits," prominent coverage was given to the press conference of Hafiz Mohammad Saeed who termed the UNSC sanctions against his organization as "an attack on Islam, Pakistan, and Islamic groups." Newspapers highlighted reports that "two U.S. military trucks were destroyed when suspected militants attacked a parking lot in Peshawar." Other highlights included reports that "U.S. drones killed six in South Waziristan Agency." All dailies also quoted the Foreign Minister Qureshi as saying that "Pakistan will not hand over any citizen to India."

All major dailies ran editorials on the UN sanctions imposed on Pakistani outfit Jamaatud Daawa. The right-wing Urdu daily, "Jasarat," noted that "there is no doubt that India has once again been successful on the diplomatic front. The UN Security Council's haste and efficiency in passing this resolution is noticeable as this is the same Security Council which does not pass a single resolution against Israel's aggression." The national English daily, "Dawn," advocated that "this time there must be no repeat of those half-hearted measures against militants. If Hafiz Saeed and his men are involved in the Mumbai attacks, they must be arrested and prosecuted." Another English daily, "The News," observed that the "Pakistan government is caught in a perilous situation. If it concedes too little, it angers New Delhi and Washington, which is standing by India even while playing the role of chief mediator. If too much is done, the government risks still fiercer attack at home." End Summary.

News Stories

"Dawa Offices In Most Cities And Towns Sealed; Hafiz Saeed, Others In Custody" "Dawn" (12/12)

"Jamaatud Dawa chief Hafiz Mohammad Saeed was placed under house arrest for three months as the countrywide crackdown on the organisation continued on Thursday. Police sealed Qudsia Mosque, the headquarters of Jamaatud Dawa in Lahore and 18 other offices throughout Punjab. Twenty-five members of the organisation were detained. A large number of publications of the organisation were seized."

"Hafiz Saeed And Lakhvi On UN Terror Watch-List" "Dawn" (12/12)

"The United Nations Security Council's Sanctions Committee put three leaders of Lashkar-e-Taiba and a Saudi operative on a terrorist watch-list, says a document released on Wednesday night."

"U.S. Backs Pakistan's Terror War Policies" "Dawn" (12/12)

"U.S. Deputy Secretary of State John D. Negroponte said in Islamabad on Thursday his country fully supported Pakistan's 'war on terror' policies. In his meetings with President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani, he said if Pakistan and India did not act sagaciously to contain the fallout from the Mumbai carnage, peace of the whole region would be affected."

"Pakistan To Abide By UN Resolution, PM Tells Negroponte" "The News" (12/12)

"Prime Minister Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani Thursday told the visiting U.S. Deputy Secretary of State John D. Negroponte that Pakistan would abide by the United Nations Security Council's resolution 1267 to ban the four militant organizations, fulfilling its international obligations."

"Negroponte Meets Tareen" "The News" (12/12)

"Deputy Secretary of State John D. Negroponte here on Thursday assured the Pakistan government of continued U.S. support for its economic revival and development agenda. In a meeting with Adviser to Prime Minister on Finance and Economic Affairs Shaukat Tareen, Negroponte appreciated the steps and measures taken by the present government and economic team, said a Finance Division press release."

"Pakistan Urged To Root Out 'Epicenter Of Terror'" "Dawn" (12/12)

"India's parliament united behind the shaken government of Prime Minister Manmohan Singh on Thursday who apologized for the lapses that allowed armed militants to raid Mumbai at will and he held Pakistan accountable for the outrage which he said was executed from its soil."

"Government Bans Banned Outfits On Media" "Daily Times" (12/12)

"The government has directed public and private TV channels not to air statements by banned Pakistani outfits, a private TV channel reported on Thursday. According to the channel, the government has also cancelled the declaration of weekly 'Ghazwa' and the monthly 'Al Dawa' - published by the now-banned Jamaatud Daawa. The ban came in the wake of a crackdown on the charity."

"Saeed Says Ban An Attack On Islam" "The News" (12/12)

"Jamaat-ud-Daawa Ameer Hafiz Muhammad Saeed on Thursday condemned the UN Security Council for banning his party merely on Indian allegations and termed it mala fide, unjustified and 'an attack on Islam, Pakistan and Islamic groups.'"

"Congress Hails Pak Action Against Militants" "The News" (12/12)

"The U.S. Congress has welcomed Pakistan's action against militants in the wake of Mumbai attacks as well as the government's pledge to cooperate in investigating the incident."

"Pakistan Acted On Good Instincts: U.S." "Dawn" (12/12)

"The U.S. State Department said on Thursday that Pakistan had acted on 'good instinct' in going after the individuals designated as terrorists by the UN Security Council, State Department spokesman Sean McCormack told a briefing. At the White House, spokeswoman Dana Perino said the vote at the UN Security Council was important not just for India but for the rest of the world as well."

"U.S. Hopes For Pakistani 'Shift' On Lashkar" "Daily Times" (12/12)

"The U.S. said on Wednesday that it hoped Pakistan would adopt a tougher stance towards Lashkar-e-Tayyaba (LT) - the group India

blames for the Mumbai attacks, said White House spokeswoman Dana Perino."

"Rice Lauds Pakistan's 'Serious' Anti-Terror Steps" "The News" (12/12)

"The U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice has lauded Pakistan's 'serious steps' against militants in the wake of terrorist attacks in Mumbai, which, she said, were aimed at stirring up trouble between the nuclear neighbors."

"Pak, India Nukes Secure: Pentagon" "The News" (12/12)

"The Pentagon expressed confidence on Tuesday that India and Pakistan's nuclear arsenals remain secure despite tensions over the recent terrorist attacks in Mumbai, said Geoff Morrell, the Pentagon Press Secretary."

"Two U.S. Military Trucks Destroyed" "Dawn" (12/12)

"Two U.S. military trucks were destroyed when suspected militants attacked a parking lot with petrol bombs on the Ring Road, Peshawar on Thursday evening."

"Six Killed In Suspected U.S. Missile Strike" "Dawn" (12/12)

"Six suspected militants were killed on Thursday when a missile apparently fired by a U.S. drone struck a house in a tribal district known to be a Taliban stronghold, Pakistani security official said."

"Pakistan Not To Hand Over Any Citizen To India" "Dawn" (12/12)

"Foreign Minister Mahmood Qureshi has said Pakistan will not hand over any of its citizens to India and it has informed the international community about."

"Bush Defends 'Necessary' U.S. Action In Pakistan" "The News" (12/12)

"U.S. President George W. Bush promised on Tuesday to 'do what is necessary' to blunt any terrorist threats originating from suspected extremist havens in Pakistan's tribal areas, while in a speech at the U.S. Military Academy in New York."

"U.S. To Deploy Three More Combat Brigades In Afghanistan: Gates" "Dawn" (12/12)

"Warning that Afghanistan will be a 'long fight,' U.S. Defence Secretary Robert Gates said on Thursday he hoped to send three more U.S. combat brigades to the country by late spring, he said during an unannounced visit to Afghanistan."

"No U.S. Economic Assistance In Cash" "The News" (12/12)

"The United States has stopped provision of cash economic assistance to Pakistan for the last few weeks, a senior official of the Finance Ministry said, wishing anonymity."

Editorials/Op-eds

"Action On Indian Orders," an editorial in the Karachi-based right-wing pro-Jamaat-e-Islami Urdu daily "Jasarat" (cir. 3,000) (12/12)

"There is no doubt that India has once again been successful on the diplomatic front. The UN's Security Council's haste and efficiency in passing this resolution is noticeable, because this is the same Security Council which does not pass a single resolution against Israel's aggression. The Security Council also needs to be reminded that it had also passed a resolution on Kashmir on Indian demand but that resolution is yet to be implemented."

"UN Sanctions," an editorial in the Karachi-based center-left independent national English daily "Dawn" (cir. 55,000) (12/09)

"This time there must be no repeat of those half-hearted measures against militants. If Hafiz Saeed and his men are involved in the Mumbai attacks, they must be arrested and prosecuted.... Reading the tea leaves to discern Islamabad's intentions is a difficult exercise at the best of times. However, a pragmatic approach by the international community, especially India and the U.S., can help nudge Pakistan to stamp out terrorism."

"Mounting Pressure," an editorial in the centrist national English daily "The News" (cir. 55,000) (12/09)

"The pressure on Pakistan, in the unpleasant aftermath of the Mumbai attacks, is mounting. Pakistan's government is caught in a perilous situation. If it concedes too little, it angers New Delhi and Washington, which is standing by India even while playing the role of chief mediator. If too much is done, the government risks still fiercer attack at home, where it has already been blamed for failing to stand up to India."

"Curbing Extremism," an editorial in the Lahore-based liberal English daily "The Post" (cir. 5,000) (12/09)

"It is an irony that certain extremist outfits have been continuing their activities on our soil in the garb of welfare projects but people doubt that their actual motive is what they apparently claim for.... These groups have their own agenda which they tend to accomplish at the cost of state apparatus and putting the future of millions at risk. No sovereign country can afford this type of militant groups to thrive on its soil."

"UNSC Sanctions," an editorial in the center-right national English daily "The Nation" (cir. 20,000) (12/09)

"The issue of fighting terrorism is high on the agenda of the international community because of the threat posed by non-state actors to the integrity of numerous countries across the globe. This explains the haste with which the UN Security Council has action to declare the Dawa a terrorist outfit...."

"American And Indian Pressure To Ban Jamaatud Dawa," an editorial in the Lahore-based independent Urdu daily "Din" (cir. 5000) (12/12)

"Pakistanis can never forget Jamaatud Dawa's social welfare services during the 2005 earthquake. In the recent earthquake in Balochistan, Jamaatud Dawa established camps throughout the country, collected the required relief goods and sent them to Balochistan. Thousands of students from the underprivileged sections of the society are getting education either free or on nominal rates at the JD schools. Anti-literacy imperialist powers do not want a local NGO [like JD] to promote elementary education in the country."

"Where Will This Cycle Of Sanctions End?," an editorial in the Lahore-based populist center-right Urdu daily "Khabrain" (cir. 50,000) (12/12)

"The question is: if today Al Dawa Trust and Al Rashid trust are banned, will India and the U.S. not demand the banning of other religious and political groups in the future? If a group or individual is involved in suspect activities, the government should deal with them strongly, but it should all be done in the national interests, not under foreign pressure."

"Once Again Misuse Of United Nations," an editorial in the Karachi-based center-right sensationalist Urdu daily "Ummat" (cir. 33,000) (12/12)

"The coordination between the U.S., Israel and India shows that they are acting jointly and now have used UN for this purpose. These all developments hint towards a greater war in the region."

"Mumbai blasts: Indian Allegations, And Demands Of The Situation," an editorial in liberal Urdu daily "Express" (cir. 25,000) (12/12)

"One thing is certain: Pakistan's moderate circles are not against improving ties with India. Similarly, a majority of Indians want better ties with Pakistan. However, there is a small section in both countries that does not want bilateral relations to improve and

is engaged in sabotaging these relations. It is time for both countries to control the anti-peace elements on their soils rather than hurling allegations at each other, so that tragedies like the Islamabad Marriott and Mumbai Taj Hotel do not recur."

"Tension Between Indo-Pak Relations," an editorial in Hyderabad based independent liberal Sindhi language daily "Kawish" (Cir. 105,000) (12/12)

"During the last several years whenever Pakistan and India moved in a positive direction, enemies of peace tried to sabotage relations by acts of terrorism. It is unfortunate that India always looks for such enemies on the other side of the border. Both these countries need to realize that they face a joint enemy and thus Pakistan's suggestion to hold joint investigation of Mumbai attacks is a viable way forward."

"DCC's Right Decision," an editorial in the Lahore-based liberal English language daily "Daily Times" (cir. 10,000) (12/09)

"The biggest challenge for Pakistan remains the Taliban and their masters, Al Qaeda; and Pakistan cannot fight this battle without international assistance. There should be no ambiguity about the task of facing up to the terrorists and defeating them.... One hopes that in the coming days, a thaw between Pakistan and India will help in making the task easier for Islamabad."

"Torching Of NATO Supplies," an editorial in the country's premier business newspaper, "Business Recorder" (cir. 25,000) (12/09)

"Attacks on NATO supplies passing through our militancy infested areas in NWFP and the tribal region seem to have assumed an alarming proportion.... The present incident shows that the protection arranged so far has been insufficient. The war in Afghanistan

having spilled over into our own country with devastating consequences, laxity of this sort is not an option. Those concerned must put their act together and ensure safe passage of the NATO supplies all the way to the Afghan border."

"What War Means," an op-ed by Ayesha Siddiqa in the Karachi-based center-left independent national English daily "Dawn" (cir. 55,000) (12/09)

"The two states must also be careful not to tolerate or encourage attacks by non-state actors. The lesson of the current crisis is very simple: the region is intrinsically connected despite political boundaries. The crisis of one is bound to spill over to the other. For those who want to destroy Pakistan or India by waging internal wars, the answer is that the overall effect would be terrible and difficult to contain within a certain geographical boundary. In any case, the continuation of terror outfits does not serve the interest of either state."

"Degrading ... But Do We Have A Choice?," an op-ed by Ayaz Amir in the centrist national English daily "The News" (cir. 55,000) (12/09)

"Distancing ourselves equally from the Taliban and the United States is not as great a contradiction as may appear at first. For us both the Yanks and the Black Turbans pose a mortal danger. We play with either and we burn our fingers."

Patterson